

# Brownfield Assessment of the Old Harlan Mill Site, Harlan, Oregon

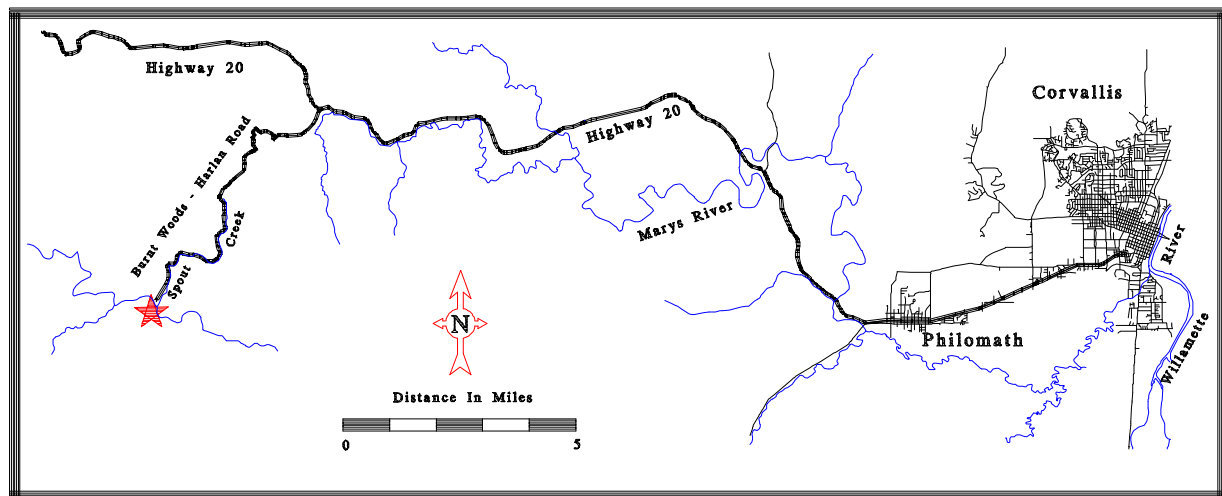
## Project Overview

Under a Cooperative Agreement with U.S. EPA Region 10, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) conducted a Brownfield Assessment at the Old Harlan Mill site in the rural community of Harlan (eastern Lincoln County, Oregon - see map below). In April 1998, Lincoln County asked DEQ and EPA to determine whether past uses had contaminated this 45-acre site, and if so, what further actions might be needed to prepare it for sale and/or industrial redevelopment. Free of charge to the county, DEQ's Site Assessment Program completed the investigation in December 1998. DEQ's main recommendations included the removal of four abandoned underground storage tanks and associated petroleum-contaminated soil, as well as further investigation of inorganic contamination in soil and groundwater from this same area.

DEQ completed the assessment in the third year of a Brownfield Pilot Project funded by EPA. The pilot is designed to determine the demand for, and potential effectiveness of, an expanded Brownfield evaluation program and to assist local redevelopment efforts. (Brownfields are usually defined as vacant or under-utilized commercial/industrial sites with known or perceived contamination that has affected their sale or redevelopment.)

## Site Background

About 35 acres of the site consist of undeveloped, forested uplands typical of Oregon's Coast Range, and a residence. The remaining central portion of the site is where 3-G Lumber Company operated a raw-lumber sawmill (no chemical treatment of wood) from the 1940s until 1986. In 1986, 3-G sold the property, and the new owner began salvaging mill equipment and lumber. Until September 1997, when Lincoln County acquired the site through tax foreclosure, several



Site Location - Old Harlan Mill

resident tenants used the site for dismantling automobiles, salvaging recreational vehicle trailers, and related activities. The property is vacant, but retains several old mill buildings, as well as four abandoned underground storage tanks (USTs) and large quantities of miscellaneous solid wastes, which have accumulated since the mill shut down. There are also several containers with unknown contents.

Spout Creek, which provides habitat for salmonids and other fish and wildlife species, flows through the property. The active portion of the site straddles the creek and includes an artificial log pond. The entire property is zoned industrial.

### **What We Did**

The project began with a scoping meeting in June 1998, attended by representatives of Lincoln County, DEQ, and EPA Region 10. In August 1998, after Lincoln County had removed solid wastes from desired sampling locations, DEQ collected 26 samples from the developed portion of the site, as follows: surface soils (7), including one background location; subsurface soils (11); sediments and surface water (3 each); and groundwater (2), including one from an on-site well that at one time supplied drinking water to site workers and residents. DEQ used a hydraulic probing device to collect the subsurface soil samples and the groundwater sample not taken from the well.

### **What We Found**

Laboratories participating in EPA's Contract Laboratory Program analyzed the soil, sediment, and water samples for volatile and semivolatile organic compounds, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and metals. A diesel-like petroleum product was found floating on a groundwater sample collected below several USTs near Spout Creek. This same sample also contained elevated levels of barium, beryllium, chromium, manganese, and nickel. While organic and inorganic contaminants were detected in some of the other samples, concentrations either were below levels of concern or represented local background conditions.

### **The Next Steps**

Lincoln County wishes to sell the property and/or prepare it for industrial redevelopment. As part of this process, DEQ recommends that the county take the following steps: 1) decommission all four USTs, and remove petroleum product and related soil and groundwater contamination around the USTs near Spout Creek; 2) characterize inorganics in soil and groundwater in this same area; 3) determine if hazardous substances are present in containers and drums remaining on-site; 4) remove accumulated solid wastes and debris; and 5) to protect Spout Creek, design appropriate infrastructure (water, wastewater, and other utilities) for future industrial activities.

**For more information or for a copy of the Brownfield Assessment report, contact:**

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